

Poster Abstracts

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A REASSESSMENT OF NATIVE DISTRIBUTION AND FUTURE CONCERNS IN LIGHT OF REPORTS OF ALOCASIA POISONING

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Alocasia (elephant's ear) is an evergreen perennial of the Araceae family that grows to a height of one to one and a half meters. The plant has calcium oxalate crystals, a poisonous substance, throughout. Alocasia is well known as a decorative plant, and most varieties grow well in a warm indoor environment. The stalks are similar in appearance to taro, and there are countless examples of food poisoning from mistaken ingestion of the plant in the wild. In Japan, textbooks generally note that wild alocasia natively grows in the southern part of Shikoku and Kyushu down to Okinawa, though there have been scattered reports in recent years of alocasia growing outside these areas, primarily in the northern part of Kyushu. Based on these reports, this paper reassesses the native distribution of alocasia growth, and, given the growth in alocasia's native environment, also considers the current state of affairs in which knowledge is required in areas that have not traditionally had to worry about properly identifying the plant.